

## Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02

SS-15 USIA-06 SSM-03 OMB-01 TRSE-00 IO-13 /085 W

-----240759Z 017589 /23

R 240630Z MAY 77

FM USINT BAGHDAD

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4599

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

C O N F I D E N T I A L BAGHDAD 0881

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, IZ, IS, XF

SUBJECT: IRAQI REACTION TO ISRAELI ELECTION RESULTS

1. SUMMARY: IRAQIS WELCOMED ELECTORAL VICTORY OF LIKUD AS CONFIRMATION OF IRAQI VIEW OF ISRAEL AS EXPANSIONIST ENTITY. THEY SEEM TO EXPECT THAT THIS WILL LEAD TO COLLAPSE OF SETTLEMENT EFFORTS, THEREBY UNDERCUTTING OTHER ARAB LEADERS AND ENHANCING IRAQ'S ABILITY TO EXERT MORE INFLUENCE IN THE ARAB WORLD. WHILE IRAQI MEDIA WERE QUICK TO SUGGEST U.S. SUPPORT OF LIKUD, IRAQI OFFICIALS HAVE PRIVATELY EXPRESSED THEIR HOPE THAT ELECTION WOULD COST ISRAEL SUPPORT WITHIN USG AND EVEN WITHIN U.S. JEWISH COMMUNITY. SOME OBSERVERS PROFESS TO SEE POSSIBILITIES FOR AN IMPROVEMENT IN IRAQ'S RELATIONS WITH THE U.S. AND SYRPAQ. END SUMMARY.

2. MEDIA GAVE VERY HEAVY PLAY TO BIOGRAPHY OF BEGIN,  
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FEATURING HIS ROLE IN TERRORIST OPERATIONS AGAINST ARAB VILLAGERS. BAATH PARTY DAILY AL-THAWRA OF MAY 19 CONCLUDED THAT "ZIONISTS ARE SEARCHING FOR A NEW LEADERSHIP WHICH IS MORE FANATICAL AND MORE AGGRESSIVE." MEDIA, WHICH HAVE LONG PREDICTED COLLAPSE OF ARAB-ISRAELI PEACE SETTLEMENT EFFORTS, CLAIMED THAT ELECTION EXPOSED THE VANITY OF EFFORTS BY "CAPITULATIONIST"

ARAB LEADERS TO ENCOURAGE ISRAELI MODERATION THROUGH ARAB CONCESSIONS. MEDIA ALSO FEATURED STATEMENTS BY USG OFFICIALS IN EFFORT TO LINK USG TO FUTURE BEGIN GOVERNMENT. JAVITS REMARKS WERE FRONT PAGE NEWS IN ALL PAPERS. GOVERNMENT-OWNED AL-JUMHURIYA OF MAY 21 LED WITH BANNER HEADLINE, "CARTER RENEWS HIS PROMISE TO SUPPORT ZIONIST ENTITY IN WAKE OF LIKUD ELECTORAL VICTORY." COMMENTATORS SUGGEST THAT U.S. INTELLIGENCE ANALYSTS KNEW ALL ALONG THAT LIKUD WIN WAS INEVITABLE AND THAT USG HAD CLEVERLY STRUNG ALONG ARAB LEADERS WITH HINTS OF EMERGING ISRAELI MODERATION.

3. IN PRIVATE CONVERSATIONS, OUR IRAQI CONTACTS TAKE A MORE NUANCED VIEW OF THE IMPLICATIONS OF LIKUD VICTORY. FOREIGN MINISTRY OFFICIALS HAVE EXPRESSED SATISFACTION THAT COMPROMISE SETTLEMENT OF SORT GOI OPPOSES NOW SEEMS TO THEM LESS LIKELY THAN BEFORE AND ASSERT THAT RECENT EVENTS HAVE BORNE OUT THEIR ORIGINAL ASSESSMENT THAT USG SETTLEMENT EFFORTS WOULD PROBABLY FAIL. THEY ALSO SEE IT AS A CHANCE TO TEST THE STRENGTH OF USG COMMITMENT TO PRINCIPLE OF WITHDRAWAL FROM OCCUPIED TERRITORIES AND OF USG INTERIM POLICY TOWARD ISRAELI OCCUPATION PRACTICES. IRAQI DIPLOMATS WHO ARE VETERANS OF ASSIGNMENTS IN U.S. ARE SPECULATING THAT A BEGIN GOVERNMENT WOULD LOSE SOME SUPPORT FROM USG AND EVEN FROM U.S. JEWISH COMMUNITY. A USUALLY RELIABLE IRAQI SOURCE WHO HAS CLOSE LINKS TO IRAQI INTELLIGENCE SPECULATES THAT GOI WILL NOW FEEL FREER TO IMPROVE RELATIONS WITH USG, AND THAT IF SETTLEMENT EFFORTS REALLY COLLAPSE GOI WILL TAKE INITIATIVE TO CONFIDENTIAL

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PATCH UP ITS RELATIONS WITH ARAB STATES, INCLUDING SYRIA. ARAB DIPLOMATS ARE EXPRESSING A SIMILAR VIEW OF GOI ATTITUDES TOWARD ISRAELI ELECTION RETURNS.

4. COMMENT: IN BAGHDAD, PROGRESS TOWARD SETTLEMENT HAS BEEN USED AS AN EXCUSE FOR CONTINUED ESTRANGEMENT FROM USG. IRAQI ASSESSMENT OF SHORT TERM EFFECT OF ISRAELI ELECTIONS MAY, ODDLY ENOUGH, HAVE IMMEDIATE EFFECT OF BRINGING ABOUT SOME IMPROVEMENT IN USG-GOI RELATIONS. IRAQI ASSESSMENT OF LONGER TERM IMPLICATIONS IS BASED ON PREMISES VASTLY DIFFERENT FROM OUR OWN AND MAY THEREFORE DIFFER SHARPLY FROM OURS.  
WILEY

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## Message Attributes

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